

NEFCO

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NORTHEAST OHIO FOUR COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

180 East South Street, Akron, Ohio 44311-2035

(330) 252-0337 • Fax (330) 252-0664

James A. Howey, Chairman

Joseph Hadley, Jr., Executive Director

May 22, 2003

Heidi VanHorn-Bash
CSX Transportation
500 Water Street-J200
Jacksonville, FL 32202

SUBJECT: Proposed Rail Abandonment in Akron, Summit County, Ohio
Docket No. AB-55 (Sub.-No. 631X)

Dear Ms. Bash:

Last week the Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning and Development Organization's (NEFCO) Intergovernmental Review (IGR) Committee met to discuss the status of the proposed rail abandonment in Akron, Ohio (docket no. AB-55, Sub.-No. 631X). In the meeting it was agreed that most of the conditions attached to the delayed IGR clearance had been addressed.

The City of Akron's Mayor's Office of Economic Development played a large role in obtaining accurate information about the complex issues surrounding this abandonment. As you are well aware, the line has now been abandoned despite our recommendation for a delayed clearance. The IGR Committee felt that at this point NEFCO's role in facilitating the review had been completed.

In this case, the committee strongly suggests that CSX communicate with affected property and business owners whose business investments are negatively affected by the termination of rail service. Alternatives to the abandonment, such as reinstalling service from the north end of this line, should also be considered. The committee also recommends that in future abandonments, CSX should notify all parties who may be affected in a timely manner so that the economic viability of the area can be preserved.

Thank you for your patience during our review and for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Sylvia R. Chinn-Levy
Intergovernmental Review Coordinator

cc: SEA-Surface Transportation Board
Intergovernmental Review Committee

Cooperation and Coordination in Development Planning
among the Units of Government in Portage, Stark, Summit and Wayne Counties